

Worden Pope to Andrew Jackson, August 6, 1831, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

WORDEN POPE TO JACKSON.

Louisville, August 6, 1831.

Dear Sir, It is not my wish or intention to trouble you. I expect my communications, to go with you, for no more than they are worth. You are indentified, in a high responsibility, with the interests of the Union. You need, nay, cannot do without the aid of *friends* to administer the Government, for your own Glory and the happiness of the Nation. In writing to you, I keep in view, that we are *friends, and citizens* of a common Country; and but exercise a privilege granted by you. I ask no answers in return. Each letter is the first draught and no *copy* is preserved. With these preliminary remarks, I will state some matters for your own Eye.

It was the object of your enemies, to obtain against you, majorities, in the senate and House of representatives of the United States and in the Legislatures of the states. I was aware, that we should have a dreadful conflict in Kentucky; and that a great battle would be fought here, to defeat Wickliffe.¹ Our adversaries had no man of talents and influence, in their ranks, who could run in sight of Wickliffe. Mr. Thruston, my brother-in-law, was *flattered* into an opposition to Wickliffe. It was done to effect a division, between Thruston and myself and our friends. It was a sore event to me. My sons remained with me. We were successful, in all but our city representative. In him we are beaten. The conduct of our enemies was *shameful*. The polls were opened at the unusual hour of between seven and eight OClock, in the morning. sixty or seventy voters were concealed, in the court-House, and permitted to vote before those from without, were admitted. The place

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of admission, was blocked up, by Clay-Bullies and those who had voted, against Jackson voters, for nearly the whole of the first day. I twice informed the Judges, without effect, of the conduct of those Bullies—sixty or seventy Clay-voters were admitted by a back window, and voted, at the very time a violent struggle was going on at the door to obtain admission. In this manner, and with the *influence* of the Bank, our adversaries obtained a great majority in the city. I had a *personal conflict*, with an *arrogant* merchant of this place, who was with and encouraging the Bullies; and which opened the way to a more equal exercise of suffrage on the part of our friends.

1 Charles A. Wickliffe, member of Congress 1823–1833, 1861–1863; Postmaster General Sept. 13, 1841–Mar. 6, 1845.

It was the *influence* of the Bank which beat us, in this City. The merchants, mechanics and Steam Boat characters are greatly indebted to, and interested in that Institution. The *fears* of debtors mechanics and the laboring classes were operated upon. This course, was commenced, and carried on, *secretly* for about two weeks before the Election. They were told that the question was “No Bank” or “Jackson”. Their printed Ticket, was headed, “protection to home industry, Internal improvements, Commerce, Bank of the United States;” *for the City*. This was not on their Ticket for the County. The party publick[ly], hura'd for “Thruston and the Bank”. altho' the opposition has been defeated at this point, yet it is believed that they have obtained a majority in Congress, and in our State-Legislature. But I feel certain that their success will not answer Mr Clays objects. It may keep others off, and Mr Clay on the turf. This is what I want.

I must be candid. It is the duty of honor and friendship. I did most seriously and painfully regret that the *Bank* had any place in your message. To me, it seemed premature and unnecessary. But we could have weathered its effects here, had it not have been for Mr Blairs attack on this Branch. The charge was untrue, and it enabled our opponents to wield it against and attack us, here. On the subject of the re-charter of the Bank, you already know my deliberate and fixed opinion. I fear the recurrence of the events, to which birth

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was given, nearly all over the Union, by the refusal to re-charter the Old Bank in 1811. Few men can contend for fundamental law, in opposition to expediency. The proof of this, is found, in the rejection of the act for re-charter in 1811 and the charter of the present Bank, in 1816. Ignorance is always controuled by expediency. *Necessity* for a thing overrules the soundest understandings. If you should reject the Charter of a Bank, it would be granted the very first session after you retire. If this Bank shall expire, every state will charter Banks the frauds and the depreciated paper of which, will drive the people, as in 1816, to a like Bank. You are not responsible for the construction given to the constitution, on that subject. That instrument, like all others, must receive expositions; and that has been the case, twice, in reference to the Bank. Mr Madison, whose wisdom, prudence and patriotism, ought not to be questioned, yielded to it. . . .